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Borden's Halifax Platform

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Promises with Strings Attached. Pledges Qualified by
Impossible Conditions. Reservations. Ifs
and Buts.

BRIBE FOR THE NEW PROVINCES

He would Restore them their Lands, but they would have
to Pay the Dominion Government for them,
upon "Fair Terms."

GOVERNMENT BY COMMISSION

Responsible Government to be a thing of the Past. His
Schemes would Involve the Country in
Millions of Debt.

P971.07

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BORDEN'S HALIFAX PLATFORM

Promises with Strings Attached. Pledges Qualified by Impossible Conditions. Reservations. Ifs and Buts.

The platform submitted by the Conservative party upon which they ask to be returned to power has been described as the platform of platitudes, platform of reservations, platform of "ifs" and "buts." It abounds in promises with strings attached, and is rich in pledges encumbered with conditions impossible of realization.

The platform of Mr. Borden cannot obscure the record of the Conservatives. However good or indifferent the platform may be, it does not change the situation. **THE CONSERVATIVES WERE HURLED FROM POWER BY AN INDIGNANT AND OUTRAGED ELECTORATE** because of extravagance, grafting, electoral corruption, bribery, incompetence and incapacity, coupled with utter failure to grasp the problems which had to be solved before Canada could enjoy permanent prosperity. Let us examine the platform.

Honest appropriation and expenditure of public moneys in the public interest.

Such a sentiment to emanate from Conservative sources borders

on the ludicrous. How brazenly the Conservative government voted and expended public moneys for private and partisan purposes, and offered bribes to greedy followers, and to the baser element of certain communities, are embalmed in the records of Parliament. In Tory days the rule was to GIVE CONTRACTS TO THE HIGHEST TENDERER AND EXACT IN RETURN A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO TORY CAMPAIGN FUNDS. Millions of the people's money were squandered in this manner.

CONSERVATIVE REIGN OF GRAFT.

Public attention having been so much directed at graft and the alleged improper use of public money it might be well to take a glance at Conservative history in this regard. If the Liberals were turned out of power, the Conservatives would succeed them. It would be interesting to know how the Conservatives acted when they were in charge of public affairs.

Take the McGreevy-Langevin scandal the figures are sufficiently eloquent without comment.

McGREEVY-LANGEVIN STEAL.

Cost to contractors of work done.	\$2,184,250
Cost to country.	3,138,234
Contractors' profit, a large part of which went into the Tory campaign fund.	953,975
Loss to country after deducting fair profit.	700,000

CURRAN BRIDGE GRAFT.

Estimated cost.	\$122,000
Actual cost	430,000
Loss to country.	270,000

DREDGING WET BASIN.

The Conservative government gave a contract to dredge 800,000 cubic yards at 35 cents per yard, although more difficult work of the same character had been executed at 27 cents per yard. The contractors made a profit of \$174,787. The contractors contributed \$25,000 of their loot for the campaign fund.

LEVIS GRAVING DOCK.

The Conservative government paid the contractors the sum of \$125,000, and out of this sum the contractors donated \$22,000 to the Tory campaign fund.

CROSS-WALL CONTRACT.

Amount paid to contractors.	\$832,448
The contract being awarded to the highest tenderer the loss to the country was.	70,000
Contribution by contractors to the Tory campaign fund.	25,000

ESQUIMALT DOCK GRAFT.

Contract let for.	\$374,559
Excess over tender of Starrs and O'Hanly.	35,614
Amount paid to contractors.	581,841
Contractors' profits	240,979
Donation to Tory campaign fund.	27,500

HARRIS LAND JOB.

The Conservative government purchased a piece of property in St. John, N.B., for \$200,000. The owners swore it was worth \$93,401 and the assessed value was \$60,000. Mr. Adams, Conservative

member for Northumberland, N.B., denounced the purchase as a job, and said three prices were paid for the land.

THE TAY CANAL.

This is a ditch running from the Rideau canal six miles to the town of Perth, the home of Hon. John Haggart. In 1882 a vote of \$50,000 was asked and the total cost was estimated at \$132,600.

In 1883 another vote was asked and the total cost estimated at \$240,000.

In 1884 another \$100,000 was asked for.

In 1887 it was stated that the cost to date had been \$256,000 and \$55,000 more was needed to finish the work.

In 1888 another \$78,000 was voted and the statement made that the work was completed.

In 1889 another \$25,000 was voted "to complete the work."

In 1890 another \$10,000 was voted "to settle with the contractors and finish the canal." Afterwards in the same session \$20,000 was asked and voted.

In 1891 another \$30,000 was wanted to "complete the canal."

The annual cost of maintenance was about \$28,000 and revenue nothing.

THE GALOPS CANAL SCANDAL.

Original estimate of cost.	\$300,000
Actual cost to country.	900,000

OTHER TORY SCANDALS.

The great Pacific scandal in which a public franchise was sold for

contributions to the election funds is well remembered by the people of Canada. There were many others of greater or less magnitude. Here are a few of them: The Langevin Block, the St. Charles Branch, North West land grabbing, the Caraquet Railway scandal, the Turcotte whitewash, the Dead Meat scheme, the Blind Shares scandal, the Oxford and New Glasgow Railway, the Yamaska Dam, the Farnham Post Office.

One might enumerate hundreds of atrocious scandals committed by the Conservative government as the result of which they were thrown out of office—**WOULD THEY BE ANY BETTER IF RETURNED TO POWER?** No, rather they would be worse, having been twelve years in opposition they would be hungry to lay their fingers [on the public treasury and the scandalous doings of early days] would be repeated ten fold by a horde of office hungry politicians.

In the face of a dirty political record such as the above given in faint outline only, the Conservatives have the audacity to think that the people of Canada will return them to power. They put on a semblance of righteousness and charge the government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier with extravagance, graft, and other forms of wrongdoing, and forget in the meantime that they were turned out of office for the very same offences which they allege against the present government. The people of Canada will not hand over the government to the men who proved faithless to their trust, or turn out of office their most progressive statesmen.

HISTORY OF TORY CORRUPTION.

The plank pleading for, and pledging the party to, honest elections provokes a smile. Can this be the political party which agreed to sell the charter for the Canadian Pacific Railway to Sir Hugh Allan in exchange for a campaign contribution of \$360,000?

What is the value of this pledge made by a party, ONE OF THE LEADERS OF WHICH SENT THIS LETTER TO SIR HUGH ALLAN?

"Dear Sir Hugh:—The friends of the government will expect to be assisted with funds in the pending elections, and any amount which you or your company shall advance for that purpose SHALL BE RECOUPED TO YOU. A memorandum of immediate requirements is below."

Then follows a request for the modest sum of \$110,000 as a starter.

This was followed by a telegram from the leader of the Conservative party in these words:

"I must have another \$10,000. Will be the last time of calling. Do not fail me. Answer to-day.—(Sgd.) John A. Macdonald."

THIS FLAGRANT ACT OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION WAS KNOWN AS THE PACIFIC SCANDAL.

Such was the fiendish ingenuity practiced by the party which now pleads purity in elections, to steal the franchise in Manitoba in 1896, that they issued instructions to agents to perpetrate the ballot frauds known as "SLIPPING," "SWITCHING," "STUFFING" AND "SPOILING" BALLOTS. The party guilty of this political crime are now pleading to be returned to power on a plank advocating the sacredness of the ballot box.

WILL THE PEOPLE PLACE FAITH IN THE SINCERITY OF A PARTY WHICH PARTICIPATED IN, AND CONDONED THE ELECTION FRAUDS OF East Hastings, Kings County, Prince Edward Island, West Middlesex, Queen's County, N.B.; Haldimand, Chicoutimi, West Northumberland, South Grey, North Middlesex, South Victoria, Muskoka and Parry Sound, South Wentworth, Chateauguay,

Brome, Carleton, East Elgin, East York, Kent, N.B.; South Ontario, Lincoln and the wholesale bribery in Quebec?

LAURIER REFORMED CIVIL SERVICE.

While the Conservatives are talking civil service reform the Liberal government are BRINGING IT ABOUT. The Conservatives had a report in their possession for years and did nothing. SIR WILFRID HAS ALREADY ENACTED LEGISLATION IN THIS REGARD.

ONLY BEST IMMIGRANTS BONUSED.

On the subject of immigration the platform advocates abolition of the bonus system, except under very special circumstances. THIS IS THE VERY POLICY NOW IN FORCE, bonus is only paid on the better class of immigrants, such as are desirable in this country.

TORIES SQUANDERED PUBLIC LANDS.

The plank referring to the administration of the public domain, recalls the fact that the Conservatives when in office GAVE AWAY TO RAILWAY CORPORATIONS 56,087,072 ACRES OF LAND, and in contrast to this is the fact that the Liberal government SINCE ASSUMING OFFICE HAS NEVER GIVEN AN ACRE TO A RAILWAY CORPORATION.

The Conservatives alienated 30,000 square miles of timber while in office, OF THIS 23,987 SQUARE MILES WERE GIVEN AWAY FREE. In one year they divided among themselves, Senators, members of parliament, and political supporters, 10,326 square miles of timber WITHOUT A DOLLAR GOING INTO THE TREASURY.

The pledge to protect the domain of the country may be taken

for what it is worth. **WHAT THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY DID BEFORE IT IS LIKELY TO DO AGAIN, if given the opportunity.**

LIBERALS CREATED SURPLUS IN P. O.

There is a pledge to improve the postal facilities. The Liberal government are improving the facilities continually. Last year \$765,000 was expended in extending and improving the service, and the sum of \$430,000 was used to increase the pay of postmasters, **AND AFTER ALL THIS ADDITIONAL EXPENSE THERE WAS A SURPLUS OF \$1,100,000.**

This showing is better than any promise. **IT IS A PERFORMANCE WORTHY OF CONTINUED CONFIDENCE** in the present administration.

LAURIER PERFORMED, BORDEN PROMISES.

The platform advocates wider powers and more extended jurisdiction to the Railway Commission. This is another instance in which the people are invited to accept a vague promise and ignore an actual performance. Sir Wilfrid Laurier **HAS ALREADY** placed telegraphs and telephones under the jurisdiction of the Railway Commission, **THUS ENLARGING ITS POWERS AND EXTENDING ITS JURISDICTION.**

TARIFF PRODUCES BIG REVENUE.

The allusion to a tariff policy is so vague that one fails to see any advantage put forward which would approach the benefits now derived by the people from a fiscal policy **WHICH PRODUCES A REVENUE**, as it was designed to do, and at the same time affords **PROPER PROTECTION TO OUR MANUFACTURING INTERESTS.**

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Mr. Borden probably appreciated the difficulty he was confronted with in the demands of the high protectionists, and those who wanted what they call adequate protection. So this plank was accompanied by these comforting words, "having due regard to the interests of the consumer, as well as to the just claims of our wage earning population."

WOULD BURDEN COUNTRY WITH DEBT.

Mr. Borden advocates the establishment of a system of national telegraphs and telephones, under conditions which shall be just to capital already invested in those enterprises.

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If this means anything, it means the purchase of existing enterprises. SUCH A COURSE WOULD INVOLVE THE COUNTRY IN MILLIONS OF DEBT, and would precipitate the government into a business with which it was not familiar, and commit the country for years to come to an amount of money for extensions and improvements that would be simply appalling. Of all the pledges this is one of the most inconsistent and unreasonable. THE PEOPLE CANNOT AFFORD TO RETURN TO POWER A PARTY PLEDGED TO BUY ALL THE TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE LINES IN THE DOMINION.

MUST BE RESPONSIBLE TO PEOPLE.

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Mr. Borden would manage our government railways by a Commission. Mr. Borden is wedded to the idea of Commissions. He would divest the administration of so much power that responsibility to the people would be only a name. A Commission "free from partisan control or influence" would be responsible only to itself, and the people would be left WITHOUT A REMEDY in case of malfeasance in office or incompetency on the part of the Commissioners.

BRIBE WITH STRING ATTACHED.

The unique plank in the platform is the following:

"The restoration of the public lands to the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan upon fair terms."

This clause is well drafted. It discloses the combined effort of the **EMINENT LAWYER AND THE SKILFULL POLITICIAN.** With one part of the sentence Mr. Borden appeals to the cupidity of the people, and with the other he provides against adverse criticism of his legal ability.

It may safely be stated that Mr. Borden is perfectly familiar with the legal aspects of the land question, as it affects the new provinces. The status of the lands now included in the new provinces **IS DETERMINED BY LAW AND BASED UPON HISTORY.** With both the history and the law Mr. Borden is familiar, and when he holds out a hope to the people of Alberta and Saskatchewan that they can acquire the lands now included in the two provinces, upon the plea that they have been wrongfully deprived of them, he knows, no man better, that such contention cannot be supported by history, nor based upon law.

LAWYER AND POLITICIAN.

An examination of the phraseology of the plank in the Conservative platform touching this matter discloses **THE ACUMEN OF THE LAWYER AND THE CRAFTINESS OF THE POLITICIAN.** The plank says, "the restoration of the public lands." The introduction of the word "restoration" suggests that the lands have been improperly taken from the people, and Mr. Borden would return them. The word implies that the lands have been unjustly retained by the Dominion, and that restitution or satisfaction must be made. It is **NOT USUAL AT LEAST TO RESTORE THAT WHICH HAS**

NOT BEEN TAKEN AWAY, and one can scarcely be said to restore property, the title to which remains undisputed. This is one feature of the case.

WHERE THE STRING APPEARS.

Another feature of this plank is the **CRAFTY MANNER IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN WORDED**. After providing that the lands must be restored, Mr. Borden says: "upon fair terms." What does this mean? If it means anything at all, it certainly means **THAT THEY SHALL BE PURCHASED FROM THE DOMINION GOVERNMENT**. If the lands already belong of right to the provinces, and they have been wrongfully taken by the government, and must be restored, then reparation should be complete, the provinces should not be asked to pay for their own. **HEREIN IS THE INHERENT WEAKNESS OF MR. BORDEN'S POSITION**. He is willing to suggest to the people that they have been defrauded of their land, because he pledges himself to restore it. He is also willing that **THE NEW PROVINCES SHOULD PAY FOR THE LAND UPON ITS RESTORATION, BECAUSE HE KNOWS WELL THAT THE LAND WAS NEVER OWNED BY THE PROVINCES**.

DOMINION OWNS THE LANDS.

The lands out of which the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were carved were purchased by the Dominion government from the Hudson Bay Company for \$1,500,000. These lands were originally included in Rupert's land, and after their purchase from the Hudson Bay Company were designated the North West Territories. Having become the property of Canada by purchase, Canada proceeded to administer them with the view of inducing a population by an energetic immigration policy at the expense of the Dominion. The only revenue was from the sale of public lands, a

matter of trifling moment in the days of heavy expenditure for the purposes enumerated.

At this time the idea of the formation of the new provinces had not presented itself within the range of practical politics. It required many years of energetic effort, the expenditure of millions of dollars for immigration purposes, and the exercise of sagacious statesmanship to make of the desolate, uninhabited prairies a desirable place for the home seeker, a fruitful field for the industrious settler.

DOMINION PAID THE COST.

During this period of upbuilding and civilizing THE LANDS WERE THE PROPERTY OF THE DOMINION, PAID FOR BY DOMINION MONEY, EXPLOITED BY DOMINION ENERGY AND SETTLED IN RESPONSE TO DOMINION EFFORT. As the people gradually spread themselves over the territorial area, they enjoyed the advantages of Dominion protection and the unearned increment of property value as a direct result of Dominion policy. In due course self government was bestowed upon the territories which entailed another expense upon the general revenue of Canada. The lands which the Dominion had bought years before began to assume a more definite value, as population increased, and the beneficial effects of intelligent administration by the Federal authorities were demonstrated.

In due course the Liberal government, following a well defined policy with respect to the growing west, decided to respond to the legitimate aspirations of the people, and proceeded to create out of the territories two provinces, to be known as Alberta and Saskatchewan.

It must be clear to any reasonable mind, that the land now included in the new provinces IS THE PROPERTY OF THE

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DOMINION, and has been so since the date of its purchase from the Hudson Bay Company. Upon what ground, then, can Mr. Borden pledge himself to "restore" it? **THE PROVINCES CREATED IN 1905 HAD NO LAND.** The area out of which they were carved was purchased by the Dominion government years ago, and nothing short of a divesting act could pass the title from the Dominion government to the provinces.

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This subject is one of interest to every province in the Dominion. For years past the several provinces have seen vast sums of money spent for the purpose of developing the west. There has been some adverse criticism that huge sums should be expended for the benefit of one section of the country, but the answer has been that the **SALES OF LAND BENEFIT THE DOMINION AS A WHOLE**, and the influx of settlers to the west makes business for the east.

COULD NOT REDEEM THE PLEDGE.

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A man who holds out inducements in the hope of securing votes **IS ACTING A DISHONEST PART**, if it be beyond his power to redeem the promises made. It is much to be regretted that the leader of the opposition has held out hopes to the people of the west **WHICH CANNOT BE REALIZED**, and that the new provinces—which have commenced their career under such favorable conditions—should have the seed of discontent sowed in their midst by one who aspires to be Premier of the Dominion.